

March 20, 2020

To Love Kindness

God has told you what is good; and what does the GOD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?

—Micah 6.8

The Bible uses the word kindness or mercy over three hundred times. It's an important concept for followers of Jesus. Kindness is not the same as being nice, although at times it may look the same. It's not about Minnesota nice but a deep abiding kindness and tenderness toward each other. Embodying kindness is a spiritual practice, and we have been given a huge opportunity to practice it.

I want to give you an update on what is happening at the church. But please know that this seems to change daily. We have just a few staff who are working in the building but keeping a safe distance from each other. Of course, the ministerial team, Philip and our soloists are meeting to film the Sunday service. Seth, Beth and I created short daily meditations that are available on the website and Facebook. Philip and other musicians will be offering music at midday starting Monday. Nina Jonson is hosting a story time for children on Facebook. The Contemplative Group is hosting meditation and prayer at 2020 (8:20 p.m.) through Zoom. Information about all these offerings will be available on our website in the next few days.

Our custodians and security staff are keeping the building clean, disinfected and safe. All our staff members are working hard and deserve praise. Joy Hansen, Accounting Manager, is collecting the mail and paying the bills. Doug Freeman, Ministry Assistant to the Clergy is fulfilling two jobs until our new Communications and Marketing person starts. Chris Bohnhoff, Cody Bourdot, and Seth Patterson have been spending innumerable hours figuring what technology we need to be able to communicate with all of you. All these folks are practicing loving kindness!

At present Academia Elze, the preschool, remains open because many of the parents work in the medical profession and need to keep working. The Groveland Food Shelf has limited hours, but we hope to keep supplying food to our neighbors. Monetary donations sent directly to the Food Shelf are appreciated.

It looks like we will not be holding in-church services in April. We are already thinking about how to celebrate Easter by live-streaming the service. As time goes on, we will figure out different options for the work of the church to continue through Zoom or other platforms. We continue to reach out to those of you with pastoral care needs. We miss you all!

Financially, we are still in a good place, but I will continue to encourage you to give on-line (or by check) what you normally would put in the offering plate. Now is also a good time to fulfill your pledge or intention to give to the church.

Again, let us shower each other with loving kindness in the coming days. During times of struggle we get a glimpse of who and whose we really are.

God bless you!

Paula